

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06
AID-05 HA-05 IO-13 /086 W
-----068159 010506Z /14
R 282235Z FEB 78
FM AMEMBASSY QUITO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7464
INFO AMCONSUL GUAYAQUIL

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT, EC
SUBJECT: THE SUPREME TRIBUNAL OF THE REFERENDUM RESIGNS

REF: QUITO 1179

1. THE SUPREME (ELECTORAL) TRIBUNAL OF THE REFERENDUM, HEADED BY EX-PRESIDENT GALO PLAZA, PRESENTED ITS RESIGNATION EN MASSE TO THE SUPREME COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENT FEBRUARY 27. THE TRIBUNAL, WHOSE PRINCIPAL FUNCTIONS HAD BEEN TO MANAGE AND OVERSEE THE CONSTITUTIONAL REFERENDUM OF JANUARY 15, HAD FUNCTIONED FOR ONE YEAR. THE NEWLY ISSUED ELECTIONS LAW PROVIDES FOR THE TRIBUNAL TO FORMALLY RECONSTITUTE ITSELF AS THE SUPREME ELECTORAL TRIBUNAL AND CARRY OUT THE SAME FUNCTIONS FOR THE UPCOMING PRESIDENTIAL AND CONGRESSIONAL ELECTIONS.

2. IN HIS DEPARTING COMMENTS TO THE PRESS, GALO PLAZA SAID THAT WHILE THE DECISION OF THE MEMBERS OF THE TRIBUNAL WAS MOTIVATED BY THEIR BELIEF THAT THEY HAD SUCCESSFULLY FULFILLED THEIR TASK (I.E. THE COMPLETION OF THE REFERENDUM), AND NOT BECAUSE OF OPPOSITION TO CERTAIN ELEMENTS OF THE ELECTIONS LAW (I.E. BUCARAM'S
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DISQUALIFICATION), HE PERSONALLY DEPLORED THE DISQUALIFICATION MOVE. HE ADDED THAT THE ELIMINATION OF THE BUCARAM CANDIDACY WAS CONTRARY TO THE WILL OF THE 700,000 ECUADOREANS WHO VOTED IN FAVOR OF THE WINNING CONSTITUTION ON JANUARY 15.

3. COMMENT: IN COMMENTS MADE TO EMBASSY OFFICERS AS

EARLY AS DECEMBER, PLAZA HAD INDICATED HIS INTENTION TO RESIGN FROM THE TRIBUNAL UPON THE COMPLETION OF THE REFERENDUM. IT SEEMS LIKELY THAT HE WOULD HAVE RESIGNED EVEN IF THE MILITARY HAD NOT MOVED TO EXCLUDE BUCARAM. HIS COMMENTS, THOUGH CRITICAL OF THE MILITARY GOVERNMENT, AND THE RESIGNATIONS OF HIS COMPANIONS ON THE TRIBUNAL, WILL PROBABLY HAVE LITTLE OR NO EFFECT ON THE RETORNO PROCESS. THE GOE WILL NOW HAVE TO FIND ANOTHER GROUP OF CITIZENS TO FORM THE SUPREME ELECTORAL TRIBUNAL TO MANAGE THE ELECTIONS. PLAZA AND HIS FELLOW TRIBUNAL MEMBERS, BY LENDING THEIR GREAT PRESTIGE TO THE GOE'S PLAN TO RETURN TO CIVILIAN GOVERNMENT, APPEAR TO HAVE CONTRIBUTED SIGNIFICANTLY TO THE SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION OF THE STAGES UP TO AND INCLUDING THE REFERENDUM ITSELF.
KEMP

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: ELECTION LAW, CONSTITUTION, REFERENDUMS, CLOSURE OF OFFICES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 28 feb 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978QUITO01282
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780093-0235
Format: TEL
From: QUITO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t1978023/aaaaacev.tel
Line Count: 77
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 89b4b7d2-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 QUITO 1179
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 05 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: N/A
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3526749
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: THE SUPREME TRIBUNAL OF THE REFERENDUM RESIGNS
TAGS: PINT, EC
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/89b4b7d2-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014